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AUTHOR Garko, Michael G.; Cissna, Kenneth M.
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ABSTRACT

Arguing that rhetorical theorist I. A. Richards has a significant contribution to make to the continuing dialogue regarding communication and values, this paper examines Richards' thinking concerning the communication-values relationship. The paper notes that the neglect of Richards' work by communication theorists is due largely to a misunderstanding of his perspective--often seen as a narrow positivism holding that values and communication are separate. A reanalysis is proposed, based on the view that Richards was an axiologically oriented theorist concerned with links among choices, values, and communication. The analysis proceeds in three steps: (1) an outline of Richards' theory of value, which synthesizes ideas found in a number of works; (2) a discussion that relates his theory of values to his ideas regarding communication, especially as they appear in his "theory of comprehending" and the associated idea of "feedforward"; and (3) a demonstration of the practical utility of the analysis, conducted by looking at the research on compliance and compliance-gaining, to show how Richards' scheme for understanding the communication-value relationship can inform contemporary communication scholarship. (FL)

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COMMUNICATION AND VALUES:

AN AXIOLOGICAL REINTERPRETATION OF I. A. RICHARDS'S THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

Michael G. Garko and Kenneth N. Cissna

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Michael G. Garko is a Doctoral Student in the Department of Communication, Florida State University, and an Adjunct Instructor in the Department of Communication, University of South Florida; Kenneth N. Cissna is an Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Communication, University of South Florida (Tampa, FL 33620).

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COMMUNICATION AND VALUES:

AN AXIOLOGICAL REINTERPRETATION OF I. A. RICHARDS'S THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

Scholarship focusing on I. A. Richards as a rhetorical or communication theorist seems to have fallen on hard times lately.¹ This neglect is unfortunate, we think, for two reasons. First, Richards is frequently misunderstood as a rather narrow positivist having no contribution to make to contemporary communication-value related questions. Second, we believe that Richards, when understood as an axiologically oriented theorist concerned with choices, values, and communication, has much to contribute to contemporary communication research.

Two distinct positions can be identified regarding the relationship between communication and values.² The "axiological" perspective holds that values and communication are inherently linked. The "positivist" view implies that values and communication have or ought to have nothing to do with one another. The positivist view is based on the proposition that all knowledge of the factual world is dependent on sense data. Two kinds of meaningful statements can be made: (a) those that contain potentially verifiable reports of sense observations, and (b) those that express formal relations within a priori systems, such as logic or mathematics. Any communication purporting to be representative of the world will be hampered by the inclusion of non-verifiable and "non-sense" "value" statements. Because values are meta-physical and non-sensical and because communication should be descriptive of the objective world, in providing the most extreme statement of this position, the logical positivists insisted that values be purged from communication.³

The axiological approach provides a competing perspective in which language, and by implication communication, is viewed as inevitably value-laden. Human beings are seen as inherently goal seeking creatures, who use language to express and seek those goals. Within this perspective, utterances cannot

be evaluatively neutral, and speech and writing necessarily reflect the personality, motives, and purposes of the communicator.⁴

We will examine I. A. Richards's thinking concerning the communication-value relationship. As an important and notable rhetorical theorist, Richards has a significant contribution to make to the ongoing dialogue regarding communication and values. Rarely, however, have his views on this relationship been treated critically.⁵ This can be accounted for in part because he is almost exclusively associated with the positivist perspective.⁶ The recent essay on "communication and values" by Ehninger and Hauser as well as the widely used rhetorical theory text by Golden, Berquist, and Coleman both present this interpretation.⁷

There is no doubt that Richards was influenced by the dominant thought of his time, the growing interest in positivism. Paradoxically, however, he was also interested in values and their role in human affairs generally and in communication specifically. We suggest that Richards can be seen as an *axiologically oriented* theorist of rhetoric and communication, and as a forerunner of the perspective represented by those Ehninger and Hauser referred to later in their chapter:

More and more scholars [they mention Richard Weaver, Kenneth Burke, and Paul Campbell] are beginning to recognize that because language necessarily reflects preferences and choices by speakers and writers, verbal messages are inevitably expressive of values to greater or lesser extents. (p. 728)

The theme of values and communication recurred in Richards's published work over at least four decades. Along with Weaver, Burke, and others concerned with the axiological aspects of human communication, Richards too saw that language represented the preferences and choices of its users, and that both the production and comprehension of virtually all messages were influenced by values.

We believe that our analysis of Richards will prove useful within several areas of contemporary communication scholarship. Within the past ten years, scholars have resumed the study of persuasion or influence within the interpersonal arena under the rubric of "compliance-gaining."⁸ This line of research shares two points of potential conjunction with Richards. First, although two dominant perspectives on compliance and compliance-gaining, the power and social exchange perspectives, deemphasize communication, compliance-gaining is a communication phenomenon to which theoretical conceptions of human communication can contribute. Second, compliance-gaining scholarship recognizes, usually implicitly, that communicators make choices, rooted in values, both in framing and in responding to messages. We believe that our analysis will show not only that Richards has been misunderstood as a strict positivist, but also that he has contemporary relevance for communication researchers and can contribute in interesting ways to such scholarly arenas as compliance and compliance-gaining.

Our analysis of Richards's conception of the value-communication relationship and its contemporary implications will proceed in three steps. First, we will outline his theory of value. This sketch will represent a synthesis of his theorizing about values found in a number of his works. Second, we will relate our conception of his theory of value to his ideas regarding communication, especially as represented in his "theory of comprehending" and the associated concept of "feedforward." We have chosen to focus on these processes because (a) comprehending represents a pervasive theoretical theme in Richards's work,⁹ and (b) these two highly inter-related concepts allow for a full discussion of his theory of communication.¹⁰ Our treatment will emphasize the concept of "choice," which has been largely overlooked within the critical work on Richards.¹¹ "Choice" unites the elements within his theory of value, and provides the bridge necessary to integrate values and

communication. Finally, we will demonstrate the practical utility of this analysis by returning to the research on compliance and compliance-gaining in order to demonstrate how Richards's scheme for understanding the communication-value relationship can inform contemporary communication scholarship.

Richards's Theory of Value

Three major concepts comprise Richards's theory of value: impulses, choices, and values. These concepts are inextricably linked with one another and a discussion of one necessarily implies the others. Our consideration will begin with impulses, move next to choices, and finally to values.

Richards employs the psychological concept of *impulses* as a base from which to construct his theory of values. Richards divides impulses into two categories, appetencies and aversions. An appetency is an approach impulse, while an aversion operates as an avoidance impulse. Both impulse forms serve to reflect the degree of value an individual experiences relative to an object. "Anything is valuable which satisfies an appetency or 'seeking after.'"¹²

Appetencies are further subdivided into the physiological and the social.¹³ Physiological appetencies include the primary needs such as eating, drinking, sleeping, and breathing; social impulses include communication and the ability to cooperate. Satisfaction of the social impulses becomes second in importance only to the physiological necessities,¹⁴ demonstrating the significance Richards assigns to communication within human experience and illustrating his willingness to incorporate communication within his discussion of values.

The concept of *choices* is the second theoretical element operating in Richards's explanation of the value process. The relationship between impulses and choices is discovered in his treatment of the competing or conflicting nature of impulses and their organization. So critical are the "incompatibilities" among impulses and the choices we make between them that

Richards suggests that "our whole existence is one long study of them, from the infant's first choice whether he shall use his mouth for screaming or for sucking, to the last codicil to his will."¹⁷ We should not be surprised, therefore, that choice is a critical concept for understanding Richards's integration of the two fundamental *human* processes of valuing and communicating.

Richards asserts that humans typically strive to resolve these incompatibilities and to organize their impulses in the most harmonious, efficient, and productive "systematization." Impulses, especially those that are felt or contemplated, are realized and ordered via a choice-making process. "Choices," for Richards, refers to selecting among competing or conflicting impulses--which to attend to, which to ignore, etc. Thus, a person makes choices in order to organize impulses.¹⁸

Choices also imply values, the third major component in Richards's theory. While choices participate in the arrangement of impulses, he also visualizes them as linking impulses to values. Values are an outgrowth of the individual's decisions about ordering impulses: "CHOICES can generate VALUE."¹⁹ As an individual makes choices over time, these choices form patterns, which constitute values. "The most important choices--and it is these which generate the strongest values--are, evidently, choices as to how we will in future choose."²⁰ This completes the process--the individual's values once formulated influence subsequent choices among impulses.

In summary, Richards views human experience as an ongoing process of choice-making, with being and becoming contingent upon the capacity to choose from among a variety of impulses. Communication is a major social impulse. The various impulses and categories of impulses vie for dominance within a person's life. Individuals order these impulses through choices. Patterns of choices come together to form values. Choices, then, simultaneously reflect

both impulses and values. This brief review of Richards's theory of value gains significance by being placed in the context of his theory of communication.

The Role of Value in Richards's Theory of Communication

In this section, we shall show how communication, one of two primary human impulses, is infused with choices and hence values. We shall demonstrate how choices and values relate to one another within Richards's "theory of comprehending," and the related concept of "feedforward." Finally, we shall argue that values, as part of the person's psychological framework, become the abstracted elements of experience within Richards's model of the communication process.

Choices, Values, and Communication

According to Richards, communication cannot involve an exact transference of identical experiences. He does allow, however, that "under certain conditions, separate minds have closely similar experiences."¹⁹ For Richards, "communication . . . takes place when one mind so acts upon its environment that another mind is influenced, and in that other mind an experience occurs which is like the experience in the first mind, and is caused in part by that experience."²⁰ The accomplishment of understanding through communication can be a difficult and arduous process even in the best of circumstances:

In general, long and varied acquaintanceship, close familiarity, lives whose circumstances have often corresponded, in short an exceptional fund of common experience is needed, if people, in the absence of special communicative gifts, active and receptive, are to communicate, and even with these gifts the success of the communication in difficult cases depends upon the extent to which past similarities in experience can be made use of. Without such similarities communication is impossible.²¹

This "exceptional fund of common experience" that is required if people are to communicate successfully (i.e., come to a reasonable understanding of

one another) reflects a series of similar past choices by the communicants and, hence, similar values. Thus, for Richards, shared values are fundamental to all human communication.

Communication occurs largely through language.²² For Richards, language is not simply a code that represents a factual reality, but is "best regarded as an instrument"²³ "for controlling our becoming."²⁴ Like other choices, decisions regarding the use of language, also reflect and generate values:

A sentence we speak or write--like any other line of behaviour--will realize some possibilities and fail to realize others. Values come in with our choices as to which possibilities are to be (*should be*) realized. If the possibilities to be realized are such and such, then a certain phrasing will be best.²⁵

The study of the human use of language, then, becomes, for Richards, a study of choices because "we communicate through offerings of CHOICES and not through presentations of FACT."²⁶ Thus, recalling the relationship between choices and values within Richards's theory of value, whenever one is making communicative choices, one is necessarily expressing and forming his or her values.

Feedforward

Within Richards's scheme, feedforward represents the psychological and value-laden *planning* process upon which all activity, especially communication, depends. He says that feedforward is "a notion indispensable to an adequate theory of conduct and a necessary part of an account of feedback."²⁷ In addition, feedforward is closely related to impulses, choices, and values.

Feedforward is a product of our earlier experience--"a selective reflection of what has been relevant in similar activity in our past."²⁸ The accumulation of an individual's past experiences are maintained, Richards says, on a "tape": "Feed-forward, for me, names the peculiar character of

tapings which arise in the service of more generic, more inclusive, tapings. And, as such, the adequacy of any description or valuation of any acteevity [sic] depends upon recognition of the sources of its feedforward."²⁹ Replaying a tape allows the communicator to utilize a previous experience (including the situation, impulses, choices, values, and outcome) in making current choices. Feedforward exercises control over the interpretations of meaning (i.e., choices) an individual (as sender or receiver) may make.³⁰

In any particular situation, an individual is more likely to draw upon some previous experiences (tapings) than others: "Tapings seem to be hierarchic, or to form an enclosure series--the widest, most inclusive or over-all tapings being least determinate."³¹ The most influential tapings are those that have the most elements in common with the present experience.

In summary, feedforward consists of prior experience and the feelings and thoughts that gave rise to it and were initiated by it (impulses), the behaviors that were considered, recommended, and/or engaged in (choices), the outcome or results of the earlier actions (feedback), and the person's values regarding the right ways to behave and the best goals to pursue.³² Thus, Richards suggests that the participants involved in a communication transaction are simultaneously executing choices, predicated upon the feedforward of their own experiences and their knowledge of the other. In the next section we will show, within Richards's theory of comprehension, how values, as the abstracted elements of experience, allow individuals to achieve understanding with those with whom they communicate.

The Theory of Comprehension

Richards's theory of comprehension is an adaptation of Shannon and Weaver's mechanical model of communication in two significant ways: (a) the addition of "comparison fields," and (b) the inclusion of his seven "instruments of comprehension."³³ In our view, the result is a model of human communication in which values play an important role.

The comparison fields constitute and are constituted by the previous symbolic choices (and by implication, values) an individual has made and observed in other situations, or as Richards says, the "utterances-within-situations" from previous communication experiences.³⁴ Jensen described the comparison fields as "the histories of utterances"³⁵ individuals have sent and received. Understanding cannot occur without the comparison fields because "the comprehending of any utterance is guided by any number of partially similar situations in which partially similar utterances have occurred. More exactly, the comprehending is a function of the comparison-fields from which it derives."³⁶ The comparison fields allow interactants to compare their present communication circumstances with their past experiences, and to utilize their values within this process.

Therefore, values are an inextricable part of Richards's conception of the communication process. Communication necessarily depends on the comparison fields--the previous communicative choices individuals have made that have been systematized into values. Because, as we demonstrated earlier, values are a natural consequence of making choices, the choices individuals make about meaning are necessarily shaped by their values existing within the comparison fields. These comparison fields or utterances-within-situations are fed-forward and allow the communicators both to encode and to decode messages.

While values are part of the experiential background individuals use in order to make present choices regarding meaning, Richards's instruments of comprehension show that valuing is also one of the things that utterances do and that communicators must take into account in forming or understanding a message. The seven "instruments of comprehension" are Richards's general tools for identifying both the sorts of work an utterance does and the methods individuals use to understand their own and others' communication.³⁷ Richards

says that a "full utterance" performs all seven functions simultaneously and requires a person to perform these in order to comprehend an utterance:

Under 1 [Indicating] we ask *WHICH* things are being talked (thought) of? Under 2 [Characterizing], *WHAT* is being said of them? Under 3 [Realizing], *EVEN SO*? Under 4 [Valuing], *SHOULD* this be so? Under 5 [Influencing], *WON'T YOU (WON'T I)*? Under 6 [Controlling], *HOW*? Under 7 [Purposing], *WHEREIN, WHEREBY, and WHEREFORE, TO WHAT END?*³⁸

The degree of understanding that occurs in a communication transaction is the result of how the communicants respond to the seven questions which comprise Richards's instruments of comprehension. These responses are determined in part by the degree of correspondence between the value systems or comparison fields of the communicators. Richards indicated that among the seven instruments only purposing "never lapses," and that "Valuing may often seem to lapse."³⁹ Given our analysis of how choices operate in Richards's conception of communication and the strong relationship he suggests between choices and values, he seems to be neglecting this relationship in the role he assigns to valuing within the instruments of comprehension (or perhaps the qualifier "seem" is the key). Like purposing, valuing is something all utterances do and which communicators must always take into account in attempting to understand what another person means.

Contribution of Richards's Axiological Perspective to Compliance-Gaining Scholarship

The axiological perspective of I. A. Richards is not merely of philosophical, theoretical, and historical interest. Indeed, this analysis has demonstrable utility for several areas of contemporary communication scholarship. We have chosen to illustrate the application of this perspective using the scholarship in the area of "compliance-gaining." We will first consider two dominant perspectives on compliance and compliance-gaining, and then show how Richards could be used to shape an communication-axiological approach. Se-

cond, we will turn to the research concerning the selection of compliance-gaining strategies and show how Richards's axiological model of communication could suggest alternative research directions.

At least two perspectives of compliance and compliance-gaining pervade the social influence literature: (a) a social exchange perspective, and (b) a power perspective.⁴⁰ Numerous variations comprise each perspective, yet several broad observations can be made regarding them.

Writers adopting a social exchange view of compliance rely on an economic exchange model of social influence in which compliance is seen in terms of an outcome reflecting a profit or loss.⁴¹ Each participant in a compliance-gaining episode attempts to maximize his or her rewards and minimize his or her costs. The agent will trade resources for the compliance of the target, while the target will give compliance in exchange for desired rewards. Thus, those writers reflecting a social exchange perspective, generally view compliance as an outcome that will result in the maximization of rewards and the minimization of losses and compliance-gaining as a process involving the exchange of resources that are rewarding to the agent and target.

Researchers favoring a power perspective of compliance utilize a resource model of power.⁴² Within this perspective it is almost axiomatic that the gaining of compliance does not occur without power (i.e., the control by the agent of resources valued by the target). In order to induce compliance, the agent must invoke available personal or institutional resources (i.e., bases of power) and transform them into some actual method of influence (a compliance-gaining strategy). Proponents of the power perspective, therefore, view compliance-gaining as the exercise of power and compliance as an outcome that occurs because of the agent's utilization of the resources that constitute his or her power bases.

The social exchange and power perspectives suffer from at least two

deficiencies.⁴³ First, they bolster principles of individual functioning. In both perspectives, the resources (either as "power bases" or "commodities for exchange") that the communicants bring to an interaction are seen as determining the nature of the interaction and its outcomes. As a result, communication is shifted into the background and individual resources are thrust into the foreground. Second, the social exchange and power perspectives ignore the role played by values in compliance-gaining. In our view, the gaining of compliance is an axiologically rich process, in which values function as a guiding force in the communicative choices of agents and targets.

Although he does not theorize specifically about compliance and compliance-gaining, Richards's axiological approach to communication can be utilized to formulate a perspective that takes into account both values and communication. Just as he suggests that communication does not proceed through "presentations of FACT," so communication in compliance-gaining situations also does not operate merely through the strategic management of "resources." When an individual seeks to influence another's "mind," he or she does so through communicative choices, which pivot around Richards's "instruments of comprehension." These choices reflect a communicator's values, which are "fed-forward" in order to influence the values of other interactants. The greater the degree of value identification (similar "comparison fields") between the interactants, the greater the opportunity for influence. Adapting Richards's ideas to such a perspective leads to compliance being conceptualized as a product of the communication between the agent and target, with compliance-gaining seen as an axiologically grounded, symbolic, communication process.

Richards's axiological perspective of communication can also inform the research on compliance and compliance-gaining. One of the primary concerns of investigators has been to identify source and situational variables that affect an agent's selection of compliance-gaining strategies.⁴⁴ Existing models of interpersonal influence attempt to describe the compliance-gaining

process in terms of the strategies that agents may enlist, the factors that can affect the agent's strategic and tactical choices, and the outcomes of those choices.⁴⁵ Although these models have the potential to provide insight, they do not explicitly consider the role of either communication or values within the compliance-gaining process, in general, or within strategy selection, in particular. Further, they do not explicitly treat the concept of choice. Current models of influence *assume* the fundamental processes of choice, values, and communication, which ought to be the *chief* factors of investigation.

In our view, what is required are models of interpersonal influence that illustrate *how* compliance-gaining works. Particular attention should be given to the communication and values choices interactants make when deciding what strategies to invoke and the role of source and situational variables in that process. Richards's conception of communication as a process of making language and meaning choices is ideally suited to illuminate how compliance-gaining strategies are selected. This perspective can enrich existing models and provide direction for the development of new models. We will first consider an implication of Richards's orientation toward communication as "choice-making," and then will explore his concepts of feedforward, comparison fields, and the instruments of comprehension.

One obvious impact of thinking about compliance-gaining from Richards's perspective as a choice-making process would be to consider both "agent" and "target" as active persuaders (i.e., choosers). Most of the compliance-gaining research is linear in orientation, and assumes that "agents" attempt to persuade "targets." Richards reminds us that the influence process is mutual, and that targets, as well as agents, make choices--to resist or comply, as well as to engage in counter compliance-gaining. Among the criteria agents use in selecting a compliance-gaining strategy is the determination of

the "target's" compliance goals and the strategies he or she may be likely to use in moving toward those. Further, the compliance-gaining efforts of targets warrants investigation in its own right.

Feedforward is central to the selection of compliance-gaining strategies. Persuasive communicators plan (consciously and unconsciously) what they are going to say and how they are going to say it based in significant part on their previous experience. They search relevant "tapes" for clues regarding their strategic choices--involving the present target on other occasions, or other targets in similar situations, on similar topics, or with similar goals. They will recall attempts of others to influence them--successful and otherwise--and will consider not only their own strategic goals but the likely goals of the other as well. Research could profitably explore *why* agents select one strategy rather than another. Upon what experiential elements do agents rely in making strategic choices in particular situations?

The concept of comparison fields suggests that the experiential background from which choices of communication strategies emerge is more complicated than the existing research on situational and source variables suggests. Richards reminds us that a communicator's previous choices have been preserved as values within these comparison fields, which in turn further shape one's future communicative choices. One useful research direction would involve exploring how values are related to the selection of compliance-gaining strategies. Do people of different values persuade differently? Another productive research direction suggested by the concept of comparison fields might be discovering the sources in individuals' prior experiences from which their repertoire of compliance-gaining strategies is drawn. How and from whom do we learn ways of persuading others--and how and from whom do we learn how to respond to others' attempts to persuade us?

Within Richards's model of comprehension, virtually all of the instruments of comprehension suggest variables whose affect on the selection of com-

pliance-gaining strategies could be productively explored. For example, "indicating" identifies the strategic importance of selecting a persuasive topic. A myriad of issues define all human relationships, and the selection of one of those issues at any given moment as a topic of influence is an important but overlooked value-laden step in the compliance-gaining process. Further, people often attempt to influence others on more than one issue simultaneously, or switch rather rapidly from one issue to another. "Characterizing" suggests the significance of attending to the manner or style in which a persuasive attempt is implemented, another concern not yet addressed. The relationship between communicator style as described by Norton and others⁴⁶ and the selection of compliance-gaining strategies seems a fertile area for investigation. The other five of Richards's seven instruments could be used similarly to identify communication research directions that would enrich our understanding of how people get their way in their relationships with others.

Conclusion

We have attempted to show that I. A. Richards was an axiologically oriented theorist of rhetoric and communication with a contribution to make for understanding the relationship between values and communication. We sketched Richards's theory of value, and linked his theory of value with his theory of communication, using the concept of choice. We explored the place of feedforward and the theory of comprehension within the communication-value relationship. Finally, we applied this perspective to the study of compliance and compliance-gaining, identifying a number of directions for compliance-gaining research that stem directly from our analysis of Richards. We hope some of these will prove fruitful. Similar applications can be made to such areas as rhetorical sensitivity, communication competence, or impression management--in fact, to any area in which choices, values, and communication are central.

Scholars may also choose to explore further the ideas of I. A. Richards.

Interpreting Richards as an axiologically inclined theorist (as well as one influenced by positivism) may cause scholars to reconsider his thinking on such topics as his conception of rhetoric or his thought regarding the nature of meaning within human communication. Richards's description of rhetoric as "the study of misunderstanding and its remedies"⁴⁷ can be illuminated further when values are considered. Just as similar use of the instruments of comprehension reflect compatible comparison fields (and hence shared values), divergent values result in degrees of misunderstanding. Within his well-known triangular model of meaning, values also can be seen to play a vital role. The "reference" area of the triangle includes the comparison fields and the feedforward process, both value-laden operations, which assist in creating the implied relationship existing between the "symbol" and the "referent."

This article does not purport to be the final word on Richards nor is it the only possible interpretation of him. Richards frequently noted the ambiguity of language and the multiple interpretations to which any text is open. Our objective has been to show another and we think legitimate interpretation of Richards, to place him in the middle of the conversation on communication and values to which scholars have thought he had no contribution to make, and to show the contemporary utility of his thought.

NOTES

Michael G. Garko (M.A., University of South Florida, 1981) a doctoral student in the Department of Communication, Florida State University, and an Adjunct Instructor in Communication, University of South Florida. Kenneth N. Cissna (Ph.D., University of Denver, 1975) is Associate Professor of Communication and Director of Graduate Studies, University of South Florida. This essay is dedicated to the memory of the late Keith Jensen, colleague and friend. This study had its genesis in Jensen's interest in the work of Richards, and in the related problems of values, choices, and communication. For an early treatment of these themes, see Keith Jensen, "I. A. Richards and His Models," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 37 (1972), 304-314. His later thought is sketched in Keith Jensen, *Communication and Human Values*, ed. Kenneth N. Cissna (Tampa: Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 1981). Jensen's thinking on these issues is also evidenced in the Master's Thesis he directed written by Michael G. Garko, "A Synthetic Approach to Values in Communication: Application and Implications of Axiological Problems in the Contemporary Study of Communication," Master's Thesis, Univ. of South Florida, 1981. The authors acknowledge the encouragement and assistance of their colleagues at the University of South Florida and Florida State University, especially Arthur P. Bochner, David H. Smith, John I. Sisco, and Theodore Clevenger in the preparation of this manuscript. Both authors contributed equally to this study.

¹We do not wish to distinguish here between rhetorical and communication study, nor among the work of "rhetoric," "communication," or "speech" scholars. Our concern is for symbolic communicative acts intended to be consumed by others. Indeed, as B. A. Fisher observed, Richards's famous definition of rhetoric ("the study of misunderstanding and its remedies")

seems remarkably contemporary and compatible with most definitions of human communication. See I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 3; B. A. Fisher, *Perspectives on Human Communication* (New York: Macmillan, 1978), p. 249.

²Although the distinction that is made here is too simplistic to represent the range and subtlety even of 20th century thought on these topics and these brief characterizations may seem closer to caricatures, they do identify two distinct and extreme positions on this issue.

³The positivist view was articulated most forcefully within the field of human communication earlier in this century by those associated with the General Semantics movement. See Alfred Korzybski, *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (Lancaster, PA: Science Press, 1933).

⁴We have borrowed the term "axiological" from Ralph T. Eubanks, "Axiological Issues in Rhetorical Inquiry," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 44 (1978), 11-24 and Ralph T. Eubanks and Virgil L. Baker, "Toward an Axiology of Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 48 (1962), 157-168 to characterize this pole of the value dichotomy, although our use of the term is somewhat different than theirs.

⁵Most scholars of communication and rhetoric have ignored the role of values in Richards's work (Paul R. Corts, "I. A. Richards on Rhetoric and Criticism," *Southern Speech Journal*, 36 [1970], 115-126; Sonja K. Foss, Karen A. Foss, and Robert Trapp, "I. A. Richards," *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric* [Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1985], pp. 17-43; Daniel Fogarty, "I. A. Richards' Theory," *Roots for a New Rhetoric* [New York: Teachers College of Columbia University, 1959], pp. 28-55; W. H. N. Hotopf, *Language, Thought and Comprehension: A Case Study of the Writings of I. A.*

Richards [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965]; Ann E. Berthoff, "I. A. Richards and the Philosophy of Rhetoric," *Rhetorical Society Quarterly*, 10 [1980], 195-210). Others have mentioned values only very briefly and without providing any substantive examination of the topic (Marie Hochmuth, "I. A. Richards and the 'New Rhetoric,'" *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 44 [1958], 1-16; B. A. Fisher, "I. A. Richards's Context of Language: An Overlooked Contribution to Rhetorico-Communication Theory," *Western Speech*, 35 [1971], 104-111; Keith Jensen, "I. A. Richards and His Models," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 37 [1972], 304-314; Geoffrey Hartman, "The Dream of Communication," in ed. Brower et al., pp. 155-178). Treatments of Richards's theory of value have also ignored his theory of communication (S. L. Bethell, "Suggestions Towards a Theory of Value," *The Criterion*, 14 [1935], 239-250; Manuel Bilsky, "I. A. Richards' Theory of Value," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 14 [1954], 536-545; Charles L. Stevenson, "Richards on the Theory of Value," in *I. A. Richards: Essays in His Honor*, ed. Reuben Brower, Helen Bendler, and John Hollander [New York: Oxford University Press, 1973], pp. 119-134). Richards, however, saw communication and values as closely related themes (see *Principles of Literary Criticism*, pp. 25-26ff).

⁶Hotopf has reviewed what he regards as the erroneous reading of Richards as a positivist (see W. H. N. Hotopf, *Language, Thought, and Comprehension: A Case Study of the Writings of I. A. Richards* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965], pp. 163-168).

⁷Douglas Ehninger and Gerard A. Hauser, "Communication of Values," in the *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1984), p. 721; James L. Golden, Goodwin F. Berquist, and William E. Coleman, *The Rhetoric of Western Thought*, 3rd ed. (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1983), p. 194.

⁸See Lawrence R. Wheelless, Robert Carraclough, and Robert Stewart, "Compliance-Gaining and Power in Persuasion," in *Communication Yearbook* 7, ed. Robert N. Bostrom (Beverly Hills: Sage and the International Communication Association, 1983), pp. 105-145; David R. Seibold, James G. Cantrill, and Renee A. Myers, "Communication and Interpersonal Influence," in *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*, eds. Mark L. Knapp and Gerald R. Miller (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1985), pp. 551-611.

⁹In suggesting the significance of Richards's "speculative instruments" within the "theory of comprehending," Fogarty observed that Richards "was aiming at these instruments all along through what, in earlier stages, he called the 'tasks of rhetoric,' 'aims of discourse,' 'language functions,' and 'kinds of meaning'" (p. 49) and noted Richards's *Interpretation in Teaching* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1937), pp. 12, 15; *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928), p. 2; and *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgment* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1929), pp. 75-76 in support of this assertion. While Fogarty demonstrated both the breadth and the continuity of Richards's thinking about comprehending as related to communication, he actually understated the case. Even earlier, in Richards's *Science and Poetry* (New York: Norton, 1926), p. 35, we find the seeds of these grand ideas. Furthermore, his thought continued to develop and his statement of the instruments of comprehension continued to change. In reprinted essays authored between 1949 (prior to *Speculative Instruments*) through 1972, only "purposing" remained untouched: "indicating" became "pointing to," "talked of," and "selecting"; "characterizing" is also "saying about" and "describing"; "realizing is called "presenting" and "distancing"; "valuing" is also termed "appraising"; "influencing" is "adjusting"; and "controlling" is alternately known as "organizing," "managing," and as "structuring" (see "Emotive Language Still" and "Semantics" in

Complementarities, ed. John Paul Russo [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976], pp. 88-97 and 98-107; "Factors and Functions in Linguistics" and "What is Saying?" in *Poetries: Their Media and Ends*, ed. Trevor Eaton [The Hague: Mouton, 1974], pp. 1-16 and 222-233; "How Does a Poem Know When It is Finished" in *Poetries and Sciences* [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970], pp. 105-121; and I. A. Richards and Christine Gibson, *Techniques in Language Control* [Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1974], pp. 136-140). Jensen's (1971) article on the instruments of comprehension as Richards's model of communication utilized the language in *Speculative Instruments* and did not identify these shifts in terminology.

Richards also continued to link the instruments of comprehension even more closely with communication. In addition to the essays cited above, see "Meanings Anew" and "The Future of Poetry" in *So Much Nearer: Essays Toward a World English* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968), pp. 113-149 and 150-182. We think we are well justified in giving considerable attention to *Speculative Instruments* generally and to the theory of comprehending in particular. In a 1968 interview Richards said, "What we [he and Ogden in *Meaning of Meaning*] tried to say has often been misunderstood. I've since written two articles that are published in what I fancy is *my most intelligent book, Speculative Instruments*. One is 'Toward a Theory of Comprehending'; the other is 'Emotive Meaning Again.' Between them, they do, I think, *say better what we tried to say earlier*" (p. 260, emphases added).

¹⁰A number of rhetoric and communication scholars (Corts; B. A. Fisher; Fogarty; Jensen) discussed the relationship of Richards's theory of comprehension and feedforward to his conception of human communication. Jensen described the centrality of Richards's theory of comprehending to his model of communication: "Richards's model of comprehending is an important and fairly graphic illustration of his concept of rhetoric as the 'study of

misunderstanding and its remedies'" ("I. A. Richards and His Models," p. 305). Richards identified the relationship between feedforward and comprehending: "Without the feedforward which structures all activity, no utterance, no comprehending" (*Speculative Instruments*, pp. 27-28).

¹¹B. A. Fisher (p. 108) mentioned choice within his discussion of Richards's model of communication. Jensen (1981) discussed choice as an important concept in relating communication and values. Otherwise, choice has been overlooked, inappropriately. Consider: "Decisions as to *meanings* for words may prove to be indistinguishable from ultimate *choices*" (Richards and Gibson, p. 140, emphasis added), and "And *this* is my first chief point: to a much greater extent than we profess we communicate through offerings of CHOICES, not through presentations of FACT. Our statements of fact themselves must be buoyed up, if they are to float at all, on invitations to consent to CHOICES of meaning" (Richards, *Speculative Instruments*, p. 139).

¹²*Principles*, p. 47.

¹³*Principles*, pp. 48-50.

¹⁴*Principles*, p. 51.

¹⁵*Principles*, p. 46.

¹⁶Although Richards uses the term "choice" only occasionally in his discussion of the process of ordering impulses, it is clear that this is the concept to which he is referring--the partly conscious, partly unconscious process of deciding among impulses. See "A Psychological Theory of Value," *Principles of Literary Criticism*, pp. 44-57. He uses the term "choice" quite often, and with the same meaning, in *Speculative Instruments*--see especially "Language and Value," pp. 137-145.

¹⁷*Speculative Instruments*, p. 140. Richards occasionally employed unorthodox capitalization, punctuation, and even spelling. In this and subsequent quotations, his original emphasis is followed.

¹⁸*Speculative Instruments*, p. 140.

¹⁹*Principles*, p. 176.

²⁰*Principles*, p. 177.

²¹*Principles*, p. 178.

²²Fisher identified language as "the most significant factor in Richards's system of rhetoric." Walter R. Fisher, "The Importance of Style in Systems of Rhetoric," *Southern Speech Journal*, 27 (1962), p. 179.

²³Ogden and Richards, *Meaning of Meaning*, p. 98.

²⁴*Speculative Instruments*, p. 9.

²⁵*Speculative Instruments*, p. 9.

²⁶*Speculative Instruments*, p. 139.

²⁷I. A. Richards, "The Secret of 'Feedforward,'" *Saturday Review*, 51 (February 3, 1968), p. 15.

²⁸Richards, "The Secret of Feedforward," p. 15.

²⁹*Speculative Instruments*, p. 121. Richards explains this spelling of "activity" on p. 120.

³⁰Jensen, "I. A. Richards and His Models," p. 305-307.

³¹*Speculative Instruments*, p. 121.

³²The distinction between "right ways to behave" and "best goals to pursue" reflects Milton Rokeach's well known conception of instrumental and terminal values. See *The Nature of Human Values* (New York: The Free Press, 1973) and "Value Theory and Communication Research: Review and Commentary," in *Communication Yearbook 3*, ed. Dan Nimmo (New Brunswick, NJ: International Communication Association and Transaction Books, 1979), pp. 7-28.

³³Fogarty characterized Richards's adaptations of Shannon and Weaver's model of communication as "small changes" (p. 53). Richards called them "considerable" (p. 22). We think they are significant and even profound: they transform a linear and mechanical model designed to improve telephone engineering into a transactional model of human understanding.

³⁴*Speculative Instruments*, p. 22. Utterance, here, is a general term that includes both spoken and written communication.

³⁵Jensen, "I. A. Richards and His Models," p. 308.

³⁶*Speculative Instruments*, pp. 24-25.

³⁷See footnotes nine and ten.

³⁸*Speculative Instruments*, p. 28.

³⁹*Speculative Instruments*, pp. 27, 35.

⁴⁰This section draws heavily on Michael G. Garko's doctoral dissertation (in progress) at Florida State University.

⁴¹Herbert C. Kelman, "Further Thoughts on the Processes of Compliance, Identification, and Internalization," in *Perspectives on Social Power*, ed. James T. Edeschi (Chicago: Aldine, 1974), pp. 125-171; Herbert C. Kelman, "Processes of Opinion Change," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 25 (1961), 57-78;

Gerald R. Miller and Mark Steinberg, *Between People: A New Analysis of Interpersonal Communication* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1975); Stephen W. King, *Communication and Social Influence* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

⁴²Amitai Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations: On Power, Involvement, and Their Correlates*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1975); Wheelless et al.; King.

⁴³Garko's dissertation discusses other deficiencies in these perspectives not relevant to this discussion.

⁴⁴Seibold et al. observe that since 1977 four trends in research on compliance-gaining strategies have developed, two of which concern situational and source effects. The other two involve (a) the development of taxonomies of compliance-gaining strategies and tactics, and (b) appropriate methodological procedures for investigating compliance-gaining strategies.

⁴⁵David Kipnis, *The Power Holders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); Virginia E. Schein, "Individual Power and Political Behaviors in Organizations: An Inadequately Explored Reality," *Academy of Management Review*, 2 (1977), 64-72; Richard T. Mowday, "Leader Characteristics, Self-Confidence, and Methods of Upward Influence in Organizational Decision Situations," *Academy of Management Journal*, 22 (1979), 709-725;

⁴⁶Robert Norton, *Communicator Style: Theory, Applications, and Measures* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983).

⁴⁷*Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p. 3.